

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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R 200915Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4695

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 8508

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP, CH, TS

SUBJECT: MARCOS TELLS LOCAL CHINESE TO CHOOSE CITIZENSHIP
STATUS

REF: MANILA 8035

SUMMARY: GOP IS CONTINUING PRESSURE ON ALIEN CHINESE TO OPT FOR CITIZENSHIP UNDER LIBERALIZED PROCEDURE. PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED JUNE 19 THAT LOCAL CHINESE MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN FILIPINO AND PRC CITIZENSHIP OR BECOME "STATELESS". HOWEVER, IN AN ASIDE WHICH GOT LITTLE PUBLICITY HE ALSO ASSURED LEADERS OF CHINESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT GOP WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH "STATELESS" PERMANENT RESIDENTS, I.E., THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO HOLD GROG PASSPORTS. AT SAME TIME, FONSEC ROMULO URGED SCHOOLS TO SPEED UP PROCESS OF FILIPINIZATION WHICH IN FACT ALREADY WELL UNDERWAY. END SUMMARY

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1. OFFICER OF FEDERATION OF FILIPINO-CHINESE CHAMBERS

OF COMMERCE (FORMERLY A BASION OF KMT POWER) CALLED ON PRES. MARCOS JUNE 19. ACCORDING PRESS, PRESIDENT TOLD THEM THAT LOCAL CHINESE MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN PRC AND PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP, OR BECOME "STATELESS". AS REPORTED BY PRESS, PRESIDENT'S ASSERTION SOUNDED LIKE A BLUNT WARNING TO BECOME FILIPINOS. HOWEVER, LEADER OF DELEGATION (BANKER RALPH NUBLA) TOLD EMBOFF THAT PRESIDENT ALSO ASSURED GROUP THAT "STATELESS" PERMANENT RESIDENTS--I.E., THOSE WHO HOLD TAIWAN PASSPORTS--COULD CONTINUE TO LIVE IN PHILIPPINES "WITHOUT INTERFERENCE". NUBLA STATED THAT HE IS CERTAIN SUCH INDIVIDUALS WILL BE ALLOWED TO KEEP TRAVELLING ON TAIWAN PASSPORTS. AT SAME TIME NUBLA SAID HE TOLD PRESIDENT (AS REPORTED IN PRESS) THAT HE EXPECTS 70-80PCT OF CHAMBER MEMBERS WILL BECOME PHILIPPINE CITIZENS UNDER NEW PROCEDURES. (AT SAME MEETING PRESIDENT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT "STRICTLY PRIVATE" TRADE WITH TAIWAN WOULD CONTINUE, AS REPORTED SEPTTEL).

2. ON SAME DAY PRESS REPORTED STATEMENT BY FONSEC ROMULO URGING LOCAL CHINESE SCHOOLS TO GET ON WITH BUSINESS OF COMPLYING WITH FILIPINIZATION AS REQUIRED BY 1973 PRESIDENTIAL DECREE. ROMULO POINTED OUT THAT SINCE ABROGATION OF TREATY OF AMITY WITH TAIWAN ON JUNE 9, CHINESE SCHOOLS HAVE HAD NO LEGAL BASIS FOR EXISTENCE, (FILIPINIZATION INVOLVES CURRICULA REVISION, REQUIREMENT THAT 60 PCT OF SCHOOL OWNERSHIP PLUS ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL BE IN PHILIPPINE CITIZEN'S HANDS, AND THAT TWO-THIRDS OF STUDENTS BE CITIZENS.) ROMULO MADE IT CLEAR THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT SHUT DOWN SCHOOLS WHICH ARE TRULY IN PROCESS OF COMPLYING.

3. COMMENT: AS NOTED REFTTEL, FACT THAT RECENT GOP-PRC COMMUNIQUE SAYS NOTHING TO DEFINE OR LIMIT PEKING'S POWERS OVER REMAINING ALIENS HAS SHARPENED GOP DESIRE TO SEE MAJORITY OF ALIENS OPT TO BECOME FILIPINOS UNDER NEW PROCEDURES. AT SAME TIME PRESIDENT'S ASIDE TO NUBLA ASSURING HIM THAT REMAINING STATELESS WILL NOT BE NTERFERED WITH IS INDICATION THAT A TYPICALLY AMBIGUOUS FILIPINO SOLUTION IS IN THE MAKING. IN ITS LAST DAYS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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OPERATION GROC EMBASSY IS REPORTEDLY ISSUING NEW PASSPORTS AND EXTENDING OLD ONES (FOR SIX-YEAR TERM) AT HEAVY PACE. INSUM, IT IS LIKELY THAT GOVERNMENT WILL ACHIEVE NATURALIZATION OF MAJORITY OF YOUNGER CHINESE BUT DOESN'T WANT TO OSTRACIZE THOSE INDIVIDUALS (INCLUDING SOME WEALTHY BUSINESSMEN) WHO PREFER TO KEEP ONE FOOT SOLIDLY IN TAIWAN.
PURNELL

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